

**SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET  
CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE**

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM45923

Dyddiad / Date: 28 August 2021

Councillor Ramesh Patel  
Chairperson  
Environmental Scrutiny Committee  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Councillor Ramesh Patel

Dear Ramesh

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 15 June 2021 – North West Corridor,  
Castle Street & City Centre East.**

Thank you for your letter 16 June 2021 dated regarding the North West Corridor, Castle Street & City Centre East. I have set up below a response to each of the comments made.

**North West Corridor**

- An update and clarity on the delivery of the BRT routes, including confirmation on if it will proceed, reasons for its delay, how you have engaged with private bus companies on the project and information on its anticipated timeline for implementation.

*Response: Targetted stakeholder engagement has been undertaken as part of WelTAG Stage 1. Engagement with the following stakeholders will be undertaken as part of WelTAG Stage 2:*

- *Welsh Government;*
- *TfW;*
- *Cardiff City Council;*
- *Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (CBC);*
- *Vale of Glamorgan County Council;*
- *Natural Resources Wales;*
- *Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority;*
- *South East Wales Trunk Road Agency;*
- *Network Rail;*
- *Bus operators: Cardiff Bus, NAT, Stagecoach;*

- *Rail operators: TfW Rail Services, Great Western Railway; and*

**GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSODD CHU**  
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

**WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU**

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh, English or bilingually. We will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.



**Neuadd y Sir**  
Caerdydd,  
CF10 4UW  
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2088  
www.caerdydd.gov.uk  
**County Hall**  
Cardiff,  
CF10 4UW  
Tel: (029) 2087 2087  
www.cardiff.gov.uk



- *Strategic Site developers.*

*Full public consultation will be undertaken in the preparation of WeITAG 3 subject to funding.*

*Cardiff Council Officers are working with the Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and Traveline Cymru on the promotion of Public Transport and Active Travel.*

*The BRT routes form part of the improvements intended to be delivered by 2025 as identified in the WeITAG Stage 1 study. The WeITAG Stage 2 study will recommend a prioritised list of schemes through further assessment of the four key aspects of well-being: economic, social, environmental and cultural establishing an outline business case. The WeITAG Stage 3 study will establish the full business case that will be used to secure funding. Delays to delivery are primarily related to securing funding. The bus operators are key stakeholders included in the engagement to inform each stage of the study work.*

*The WeITAG Stage 2 study will recommend a prioritised list of schemes through further assessment of the four key aspects of well-being: economic, social, environmental and cultural establishing an outline business case.*

*Delays are primarily related to securing funding and the WeITAG study work will establish the business cases in support of funding bids to deliver the projects as soon as practicable.*

*The transport infrastructure is tailored to the phased implementation of the developments to support the use of sustainable travel. This also includes the way the sites are designed as part of the master planning.*

- Initial insight into what you, and officers deem as the ‘top three’ proposals which are likely to be implemented.

*It would not be appropriate to give a view on the ‘top three’ at this stage because the study work needs to be done objectively.*

### **Castle Street**

- Clarity and insight into how much of the decision to pursue ‘Option One’ was due to the results of the consultation.

*Response: Whilst the results of the consultation were considered, they were done so in conjunction with other factors such as the COVID19 recovery and the risk of increased traffic.*

- How the decisions to re-open up Castle Street to private traffic has been levelled out against the issue of 'induced demand' and the principles of clean air.

*Response: In order to support the decision to revert to the Welsh Government approved clean air plan scheme (Option 1), the Council undertook further detailed modelling using the South East Wales Transport Model in a Variable Demand Mode (VDM). The VDM version includes changes to trip patterns induced by the schemes which were not originally accounted for in the previous modelling works. The modelling projects responses in terms of mode, destination and time period choice in reaction to changes in travel costs. This resulted in reductions in the number of total car trips made in the city centre in response to the removal of capacity and changes to allowed movements on the highway networks. As a result of these changes in trip patterns, as well as changes in network routing, there have been some large reductions in traffic flows on roads affected by the schemes in both Option 1 and 2, particularly on Castle Street and hence the improvements in NO2 concentrations and evidence that compliance will be achieved.*

*However, elsewhere there have been some increases in traffic flows as a result of changes in destination choice and re-routing traffic to avoid Castle Street. Using this updated transportation data our Air Quality Consultants, Ricardo AEA, undertook further detailed air quality modelling, replicating the previous methodology to develop the Clean Air Plan. The results of this modelling indicated that pollution levels would be forecasted to increase in 34 of 42 streets and key routes into the city if cars are completely displaced from Castle Street and Option 2 was adopted by the council.*

*Whilst the modelled rise in surrounding areas is within legal limits and no roads were forecasted to be non-compliant, there are clear concerns that any rise of air pollution in residential areas, in favour of achieving lower levels of pollution on the mainly non-residential Castle Street, is one that needed to be carefully considered as part of the decision-making process. This is particularly important as many of these residential areas already have relatively poor levels of air quality, and it is acknowledged that there is no safe limit for NO2 pollution.*

*A further consideration that had to be taken account as part of the decision-making process, is that the baseline traffic data used to undertake these assessments is based on pre-Covid travel patterns, and therefore there are some justifiable uncertainties on what traffic flows, will look like once lockdown has been lifted and normal travel behaviours return. There is a risk that there could be an increase in car use, as a result of any ongoing social-distancing requirements on public transport, which could result in pollution levels in surrounding residential streets increasing further than the levels projected in the modelling.*

*In taking all the above evidence into consideration, the decision was to proceed with Option 1, which fully replicates the functionality of the Welsh Government approved Clean Air Scheme, to ensure that compliance on Castle Street could be achieved in the shortest possible time. This option also ensures that the displacement of NO2 pollution to surrounding, mainly residential areas, would be minimised.*

- In 9 months time, Committee receives a report detailing how closely the actual activity on Castle Street since its re-opening, has resembled the modelling predicted in the papers.

*Response - It should be noted by the Committee that compliance needs to be reported in terms of meeting the air quality objective for NO2 which is based on an annual average data set. However, we are currently in discussions with Welsh Government and their expert panel to agree the monitoring and evaluation requirements of Option 1 in terms of ensuring compliance is achieved and reported to Welsh Government to comply with the legal direction. We would be more than happy to provide the Committee with a report detailing the monitoring and evaluation of Option 1, although we will need to agree the specific date of this to ensure it meets the requirements of Welsh Government.*

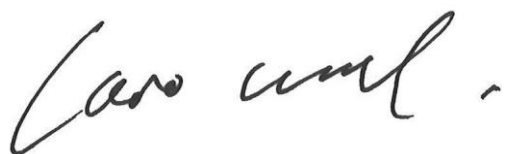
- Further clarity and rationale surrounding if electric buses will be included on this key route, why it has not already been included and when there will be capacity to do so.

*Response –As part of the ULEV Bid to secure the funding for the 36 electric buses that are being procured by Cardiff Bus, it was clearly indicated that the routes that the buses would operate would target routes within Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) and Castle Street in order to realise the air quality benefits that these zero emission buses would provide.*

*As such the following routes will see the introduction of Electric Buses later this year The proposed routes as suggested by Cardiff Bus were as follows:*

- 12 vehicles for the 27 route – route is within City Centre AQMA and Castle Street;
- 12 vehicles for 44/45 route – route is partly in the City Centre AQMA and Stephenson Court AQMA; and
- 12 vehicles for 49/50 route – route is within City Centre AQMA, Castle Street and Stephenson Court AQMA.

Yours Sincerely,



**Cynghorydd / Councillor Caro Wild**

**Aelod Cabinet dros Gynllunio Strategol a Thrafnidiaeth**

**Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport**